

**Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact  
For Little Vulcan Mountain Bighorn Sheep Habitat Enhancement Project  
EA#OR135-FY03-02**

**Decision**

It is my decision to implement Alternative 1 (Proposed Action), including management actions, as described in EA#OR135-FY03-02 for Little Vulcan Mountain Bighorn Sheep Enhancement Project. This decision provides for harvest of approximately one million board feet of timber from 205 acres, through thinning of both the understory and the overstory trees. Other actions to be conducted include manual site preparation, prescribed burning, and fencing.

**Rationale for Decision**

This project will improve visual security, forage availability, and proximity to escape cover for bighorn sheep which have experienced declining populations in the Little Vulcan Mountain area. These factors are considered critical in improving habitat conditions for bighorn sheep. The resulting condition is expected to approximate the area's historical condition. Telemetry data validates bighorn sheep use of the areas projected for treatment.

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

The environmental assessment was made available for a 30-day public comment period by posting on the Spokane BLM District website, by news release of its availability to local newspapers including the Republic News Miner, and by distribution to potentially affected tribes and the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The environmental assessment or news release of the EA availability was also posted at local business establishments in Curlew and the Curlew Post Office. Two comment letters were received. One letter commented on the specific sight distance for bighorn sheep and consideration of visual resources. As a result of that comment letter, BLM staff conducted a computerized visual analysis of the proposed project and sent a letter to the respondent regarding the sight distance and providing the results of the visual analysis. No further correspondence from that respondent was received. The other letter was from the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, concurring with the Area of Potential Affect. None of the comments received, nor the additional analysis of visual resources, revealed any new data or need for additional assessment of the proposed project.

Considering the Management Actions/Project Design Features to be implemented, the analysis of the potential environmental impacts as described in Environmental Assessment #OR135-FY02-02), and other information available to me, including a Biological Assessment, I have determined that the expected impacts are not expected to be significant. Among the protective measures are actions to reduce soil impacts, minimize disturbance to wildlife in the project area, and reduce the potential for weed infestation. Considering this information, an environmental impact statement is not required and will not be prepared.

/s/ Kevin Devitt  
Field Manager, Border Resource Area

4/16/04  
Date